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(54) **METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR A HEADSET WITH INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENT SENSORS**

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H04R 1/10 (2006.01)
H04R 3/00 (2006.01)
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USPC 381/57, 77
See application file for complete search history.

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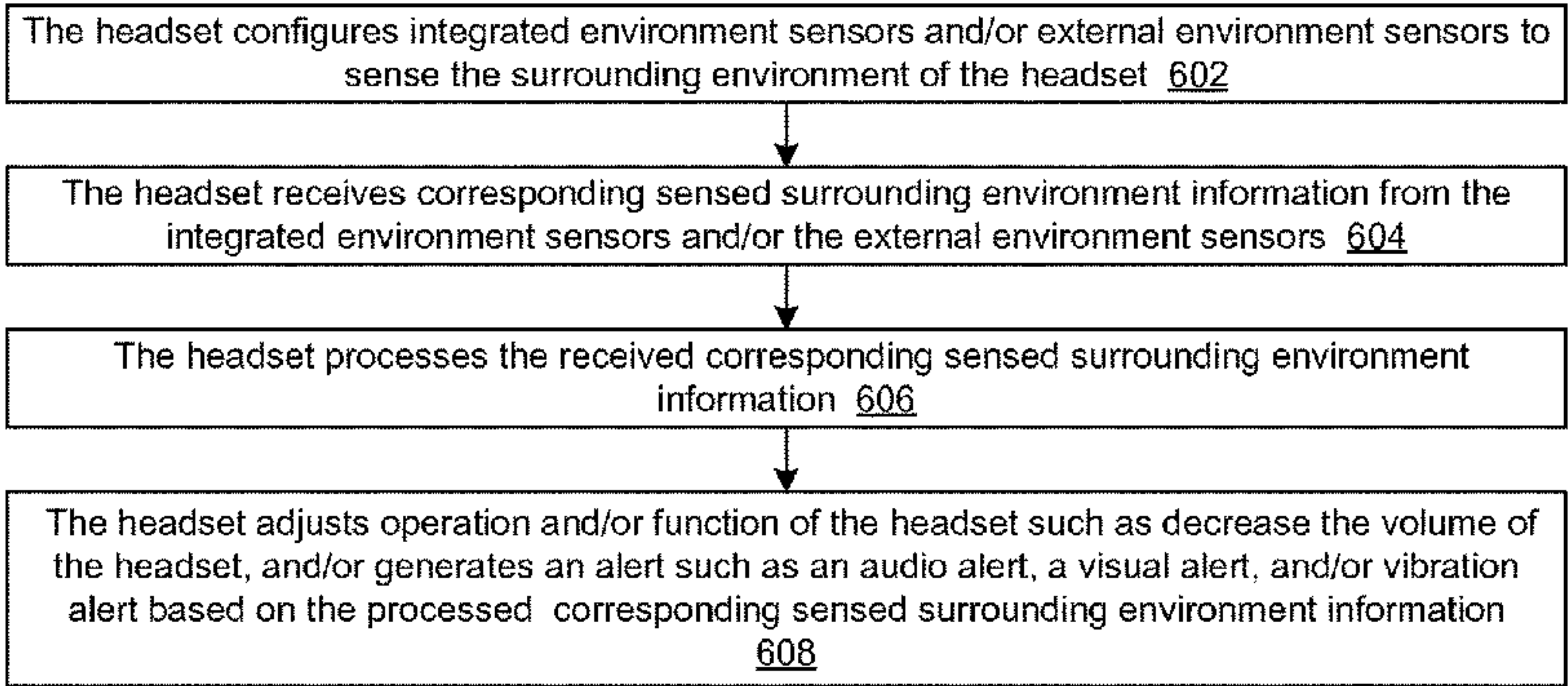
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

An electronic device receives audio from an audio source and outputs the audio via speakers of the device. While outputting the audio via the speakers, the device senses its surrounding environment, and adjusts its operation, based on the sensed environment, to alert a listener wearing the device. The adjustment may comprise generation of one or more audio, visual, and/or vibration notifications to the listener using the device. A volume of the audio output via the speakers may be adjusted based on the sensed surrounding environment. The device may detect whether a first condition is present in the surrounding environment, decrease the volume when the first condition is detected in the surrounding environment, and increase the volume when the first condition is not detected in the surrounding environment.

16 Claims, 11 Drawing Sheets

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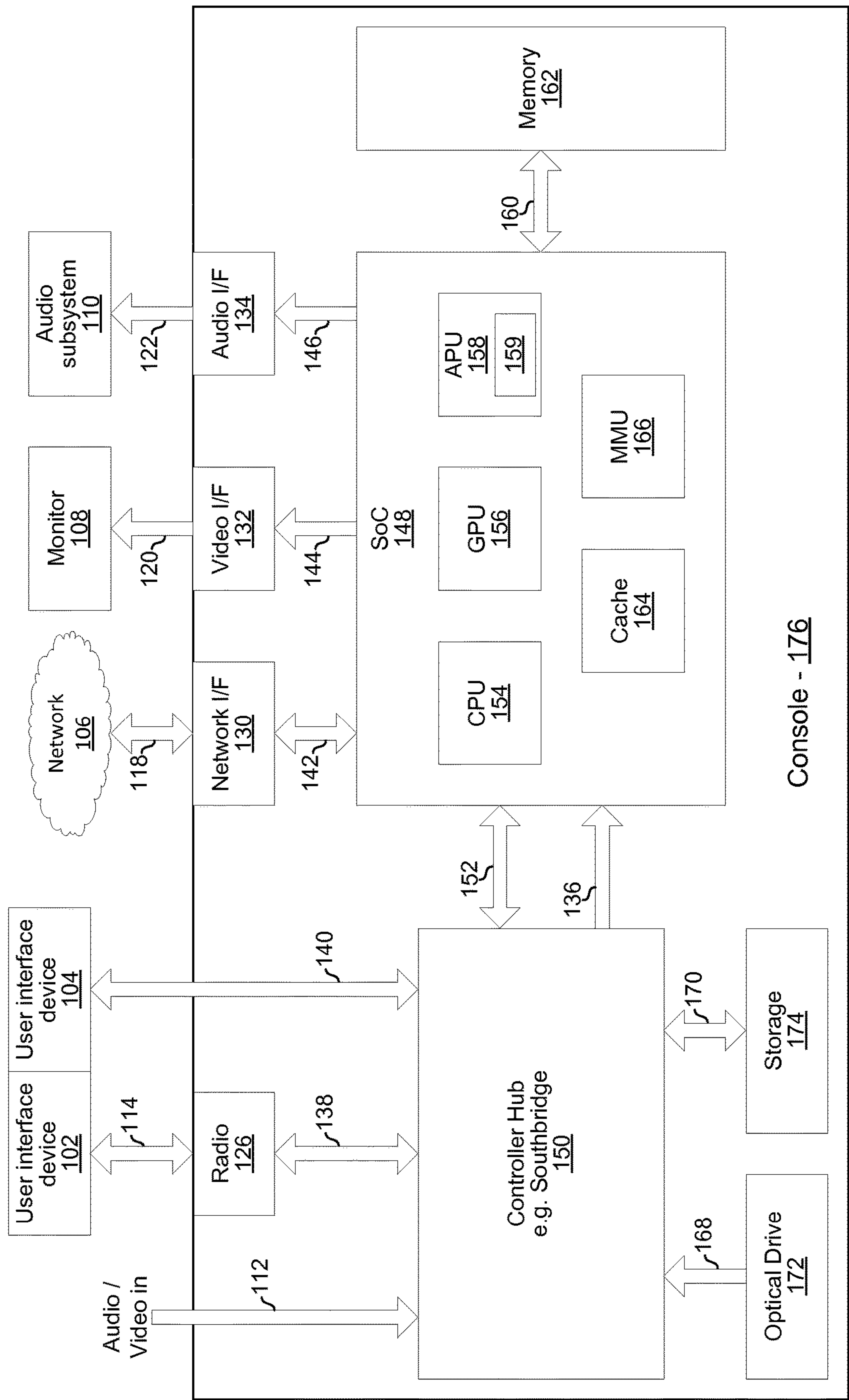


FIG. 1A

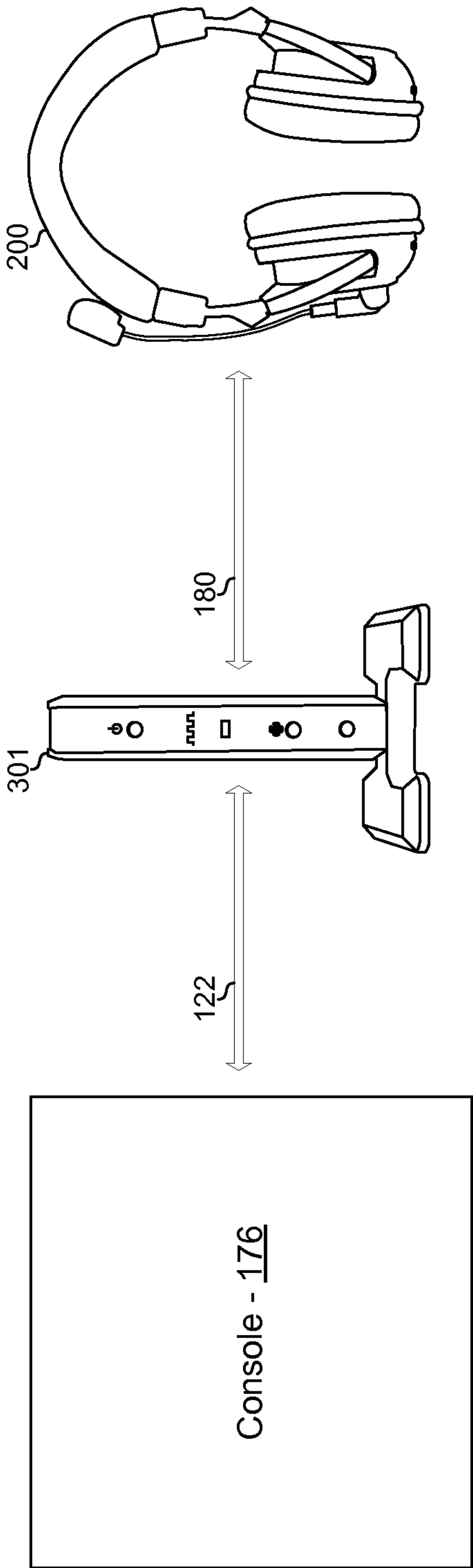


FIG. 1B

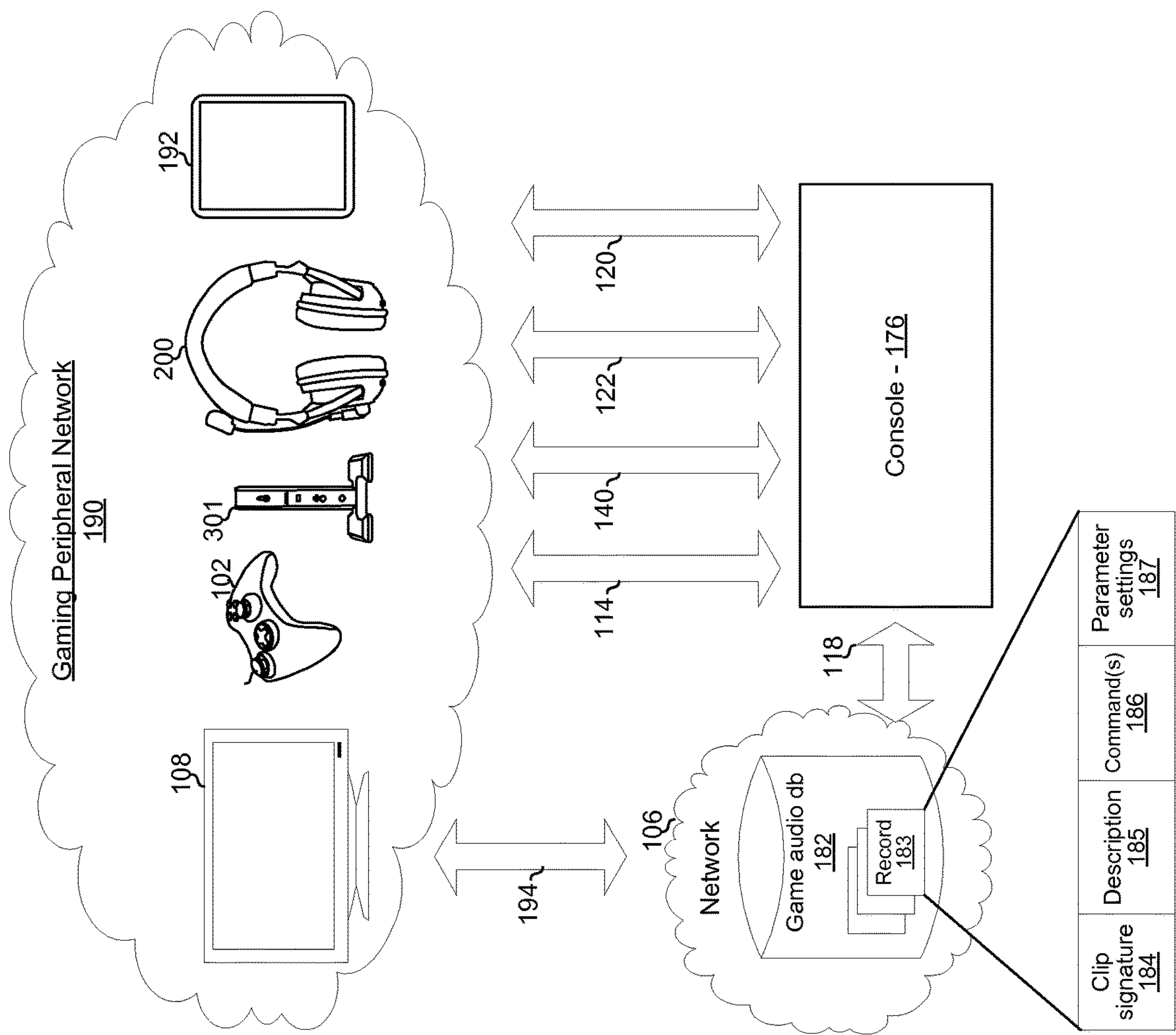


FIG. 1C

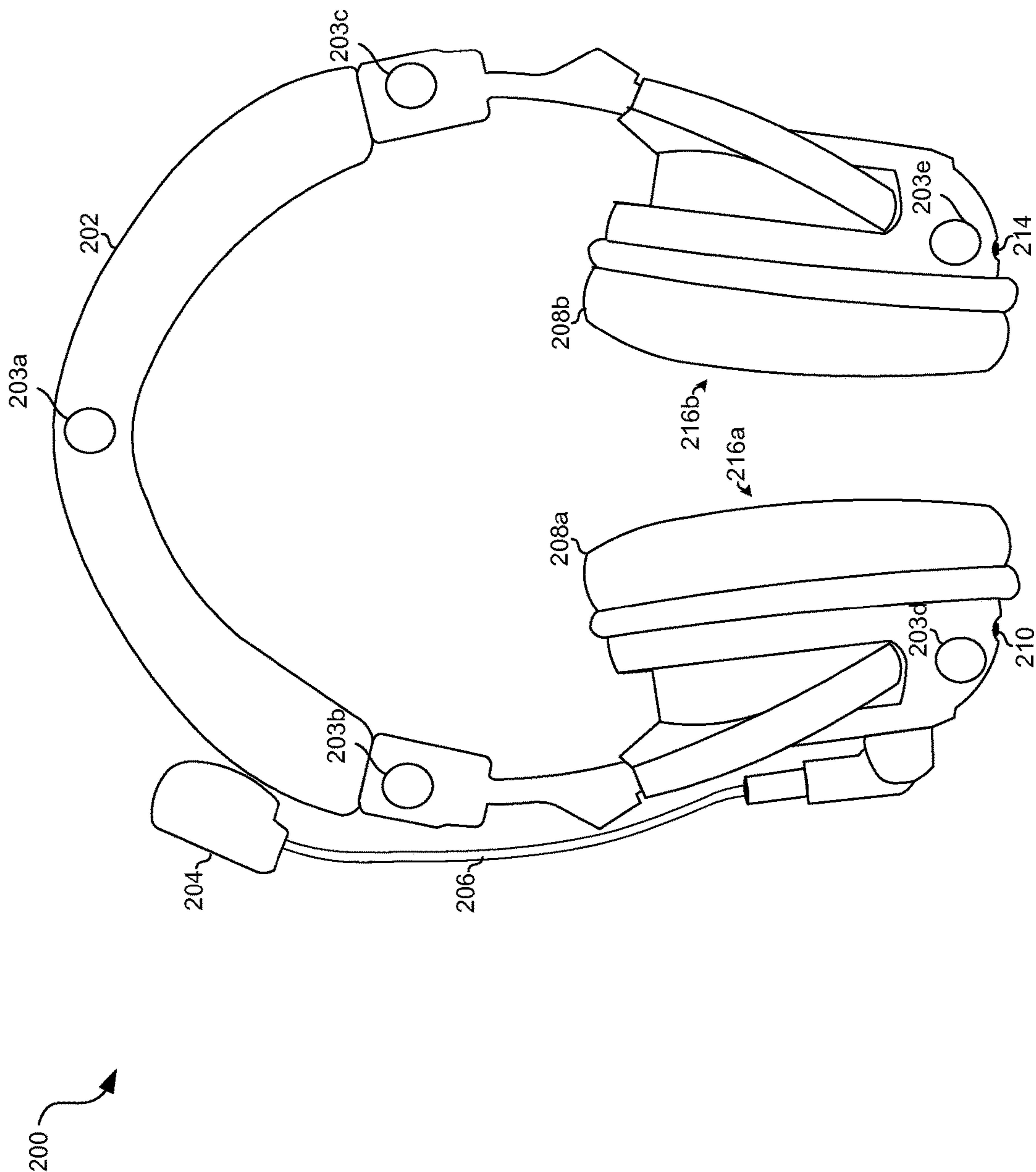


FIG. 2A

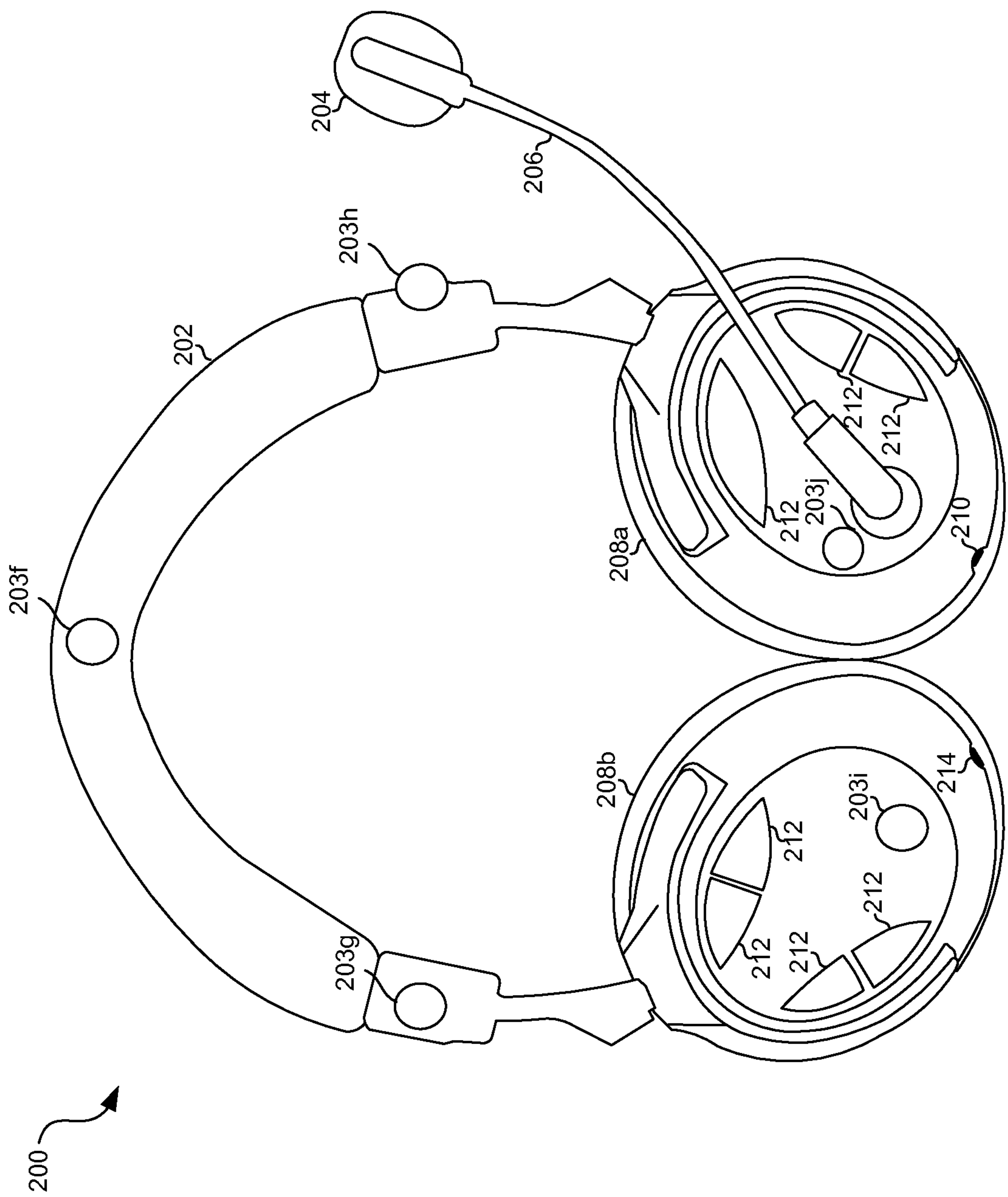


FIG. 2B

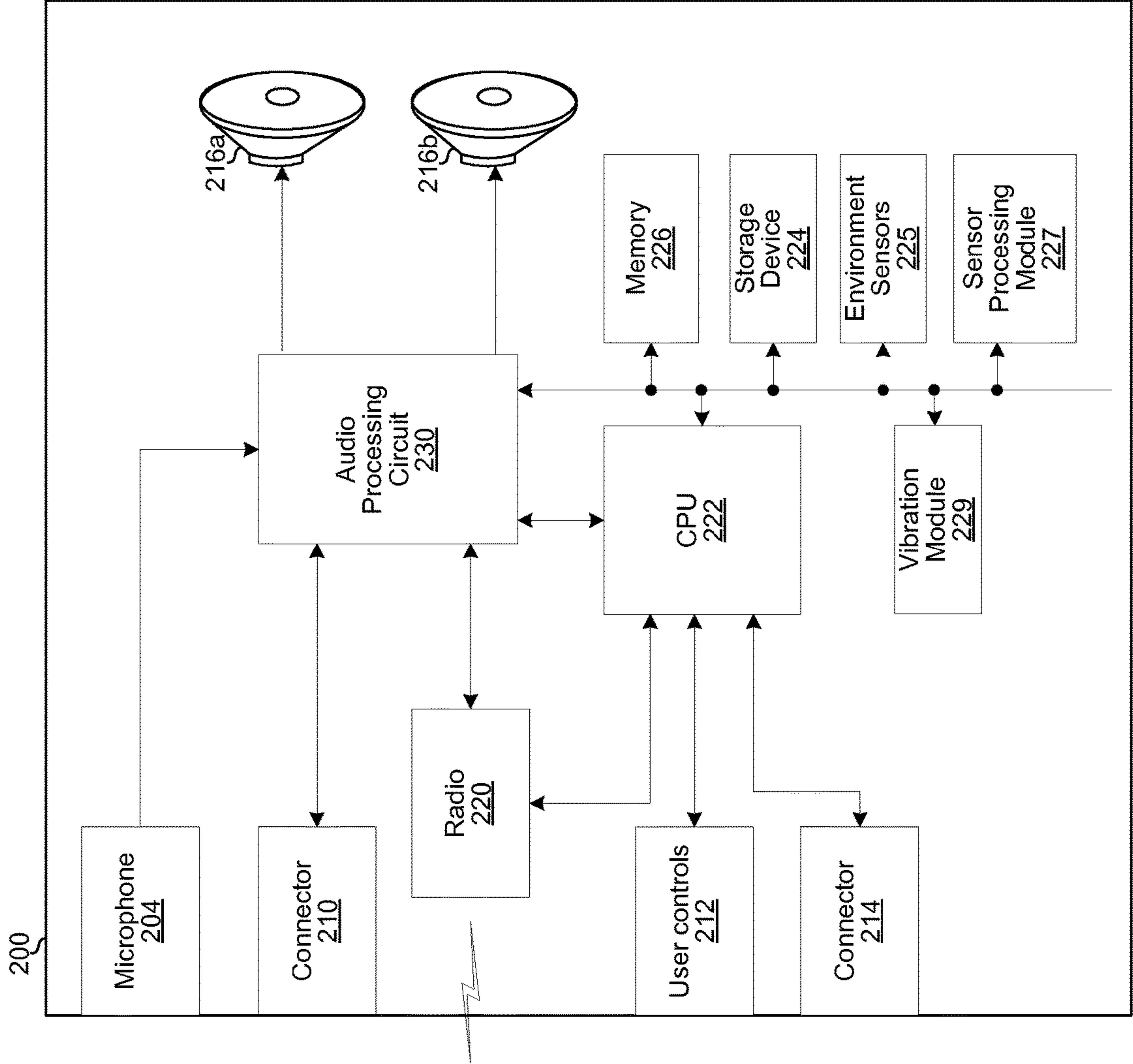


FIG. 2C

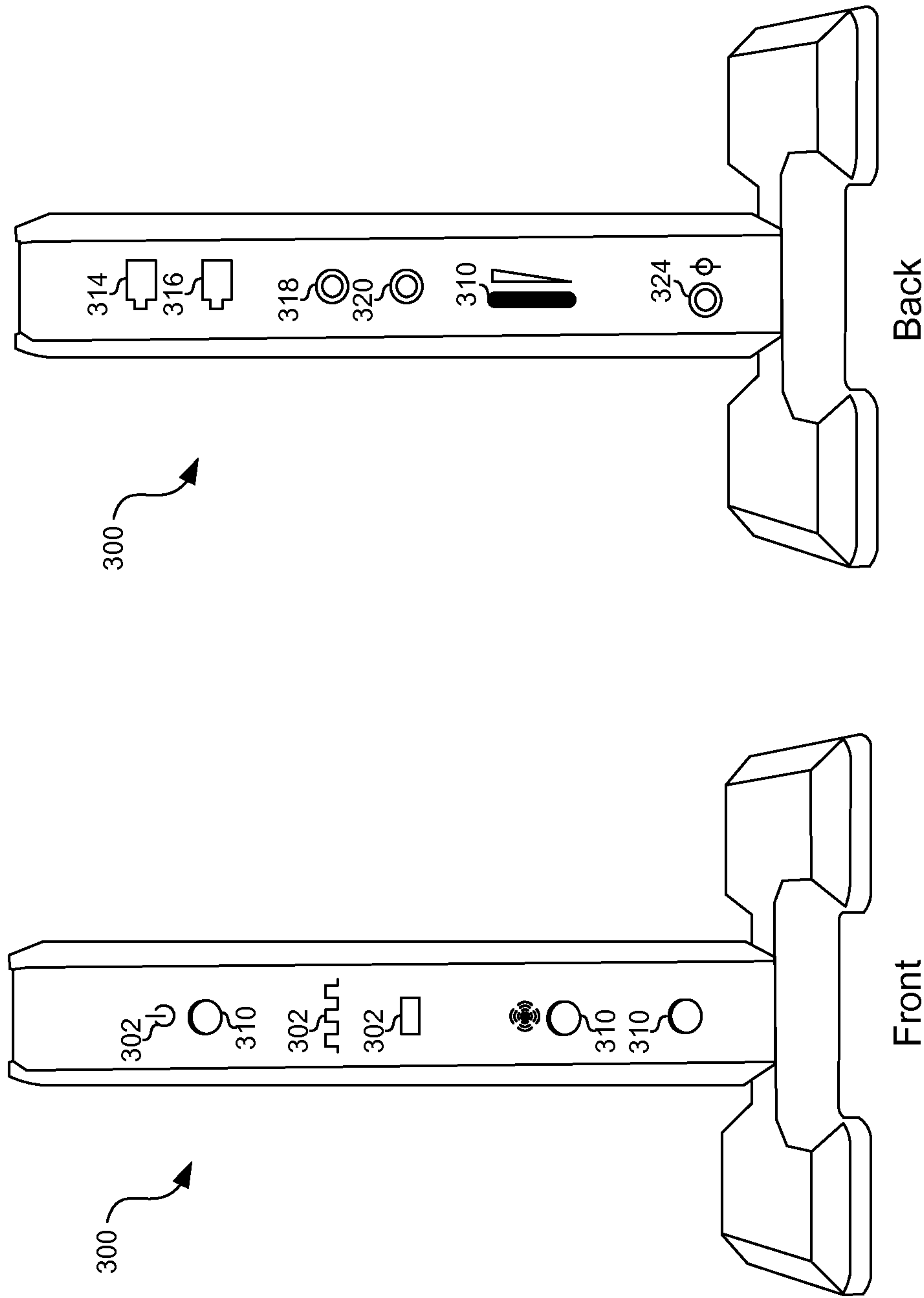


FIG. 3A

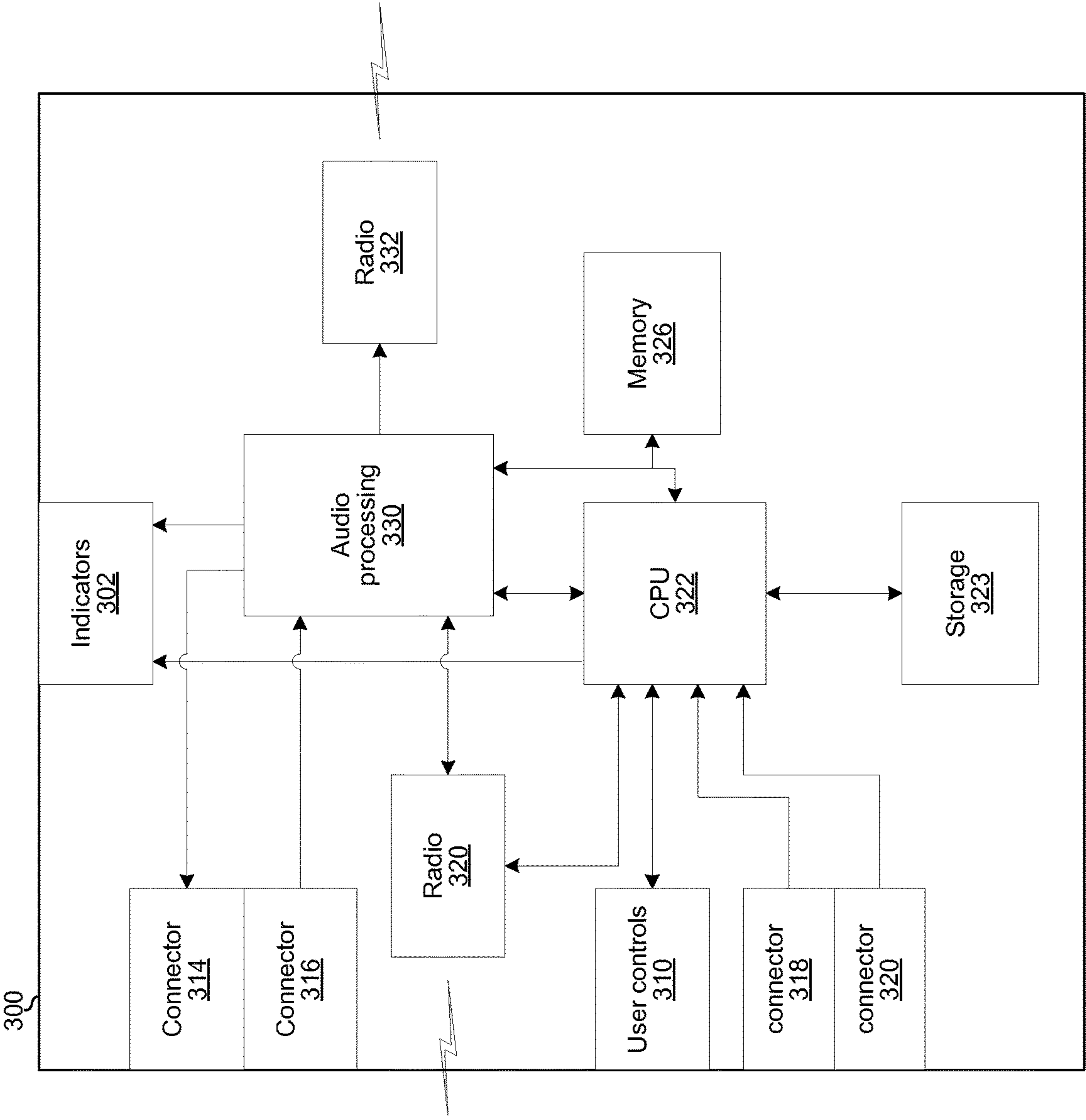


FIG. 3B

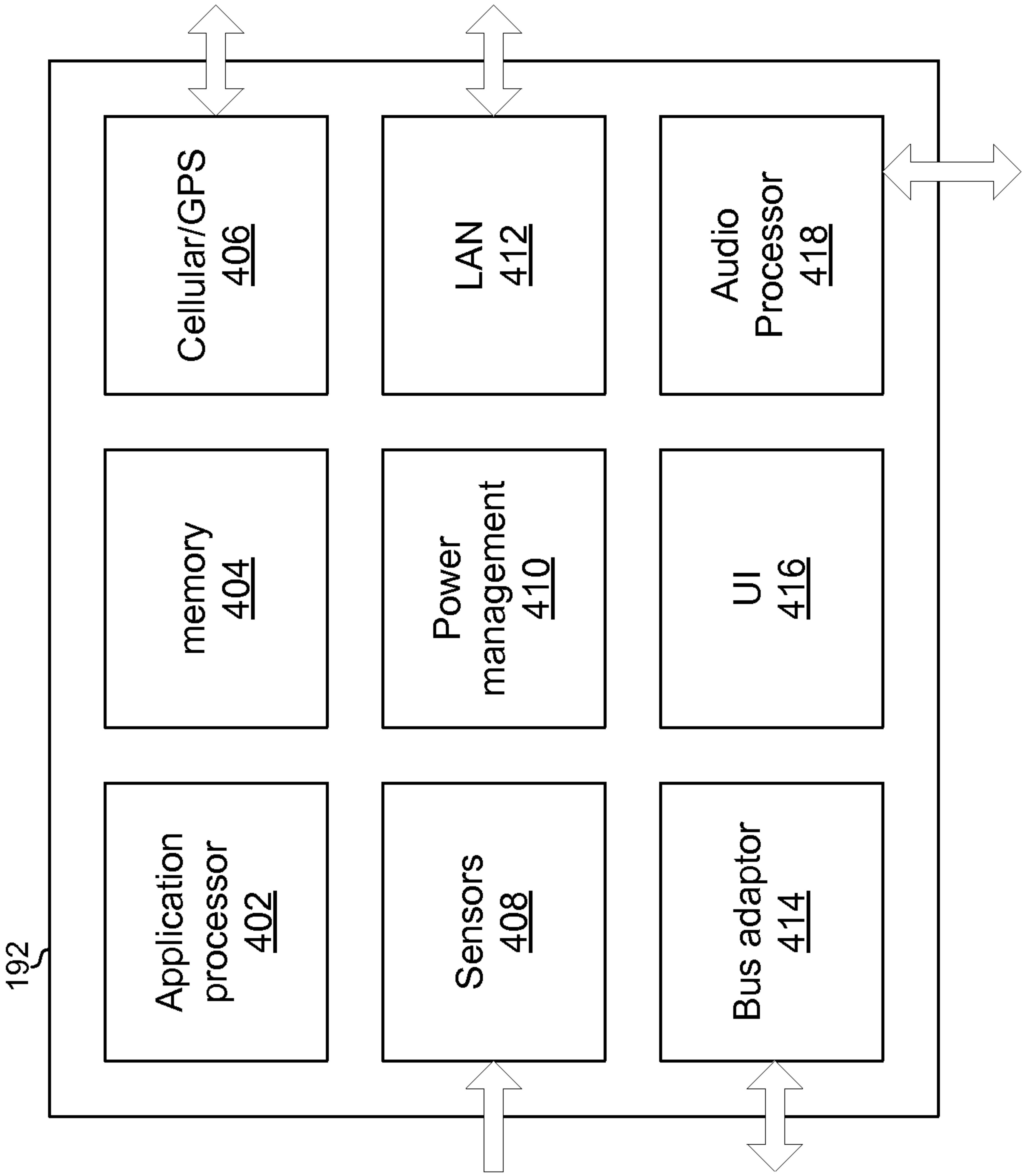


FIG. 4

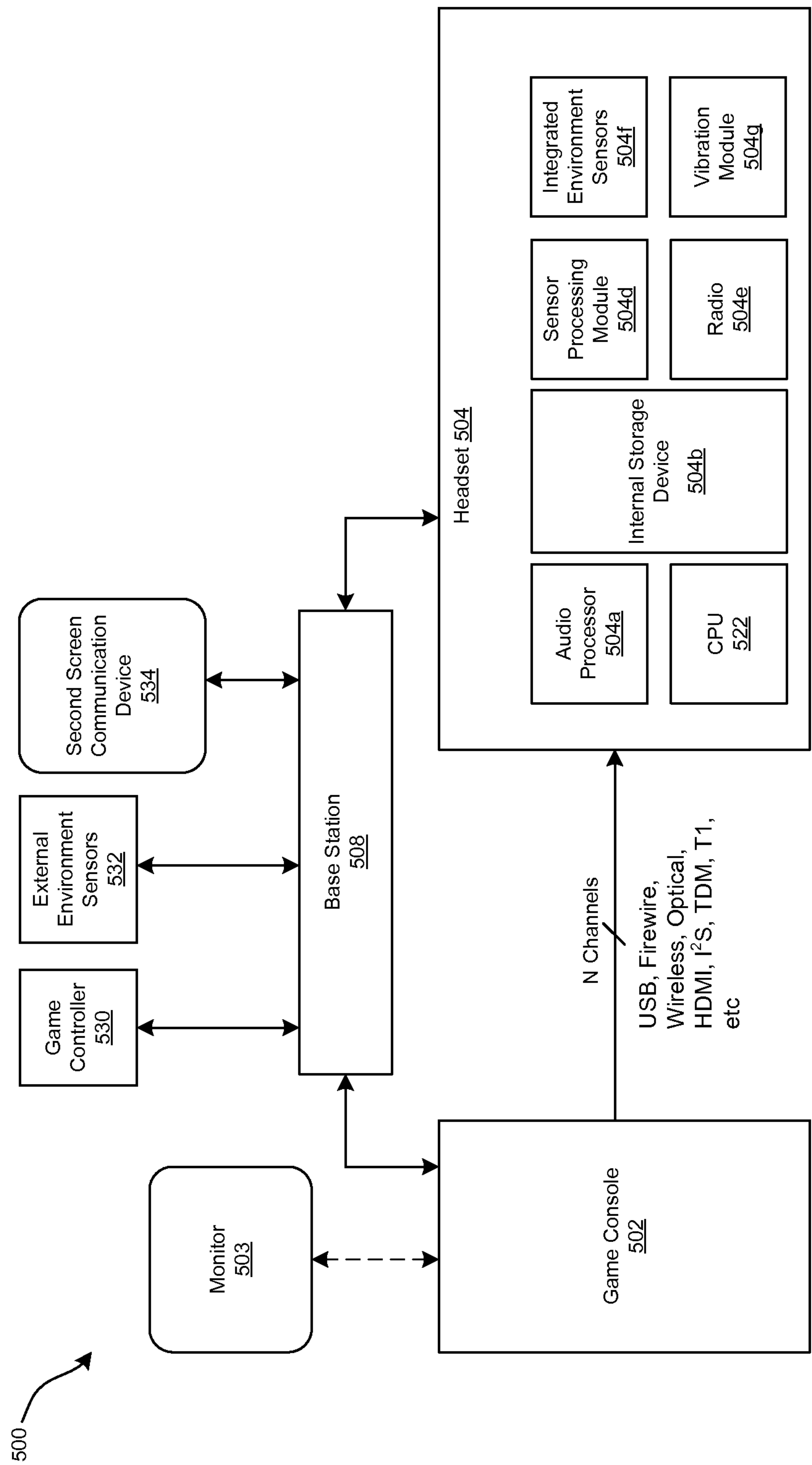


FIG. 5

600 →

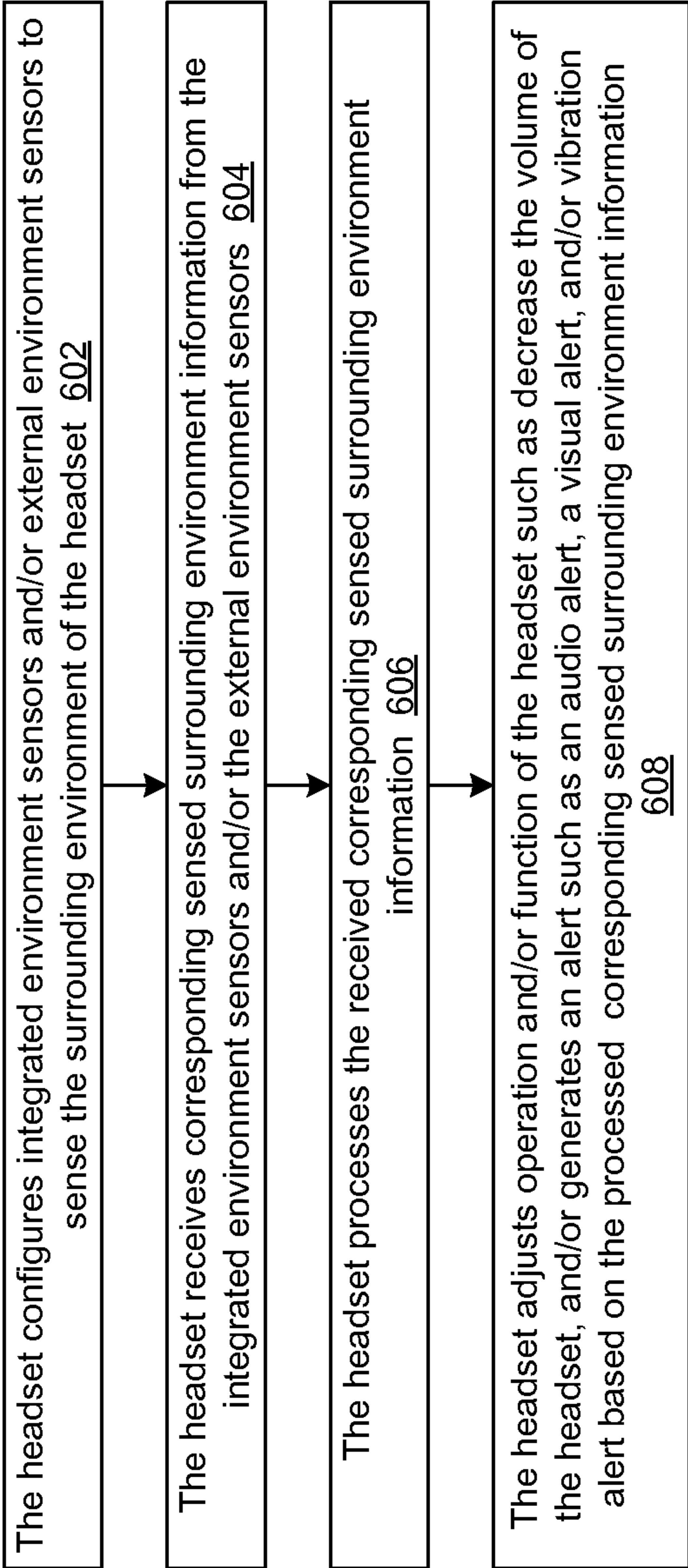


FIG. 6

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METHOD AND SYSTEM FOR A HEADSET WITH INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENT SENSORS

CLAIM OF PRIORITY

This application claims the benefit of priority to U.S. provisional patent application 61/889,108 titled "Method and System for a Headset with Integrated Environment Sensors" and filed on Oct. 10, 2013, which is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

INCORPORATION BY REFERENCE

United States patent application publication US2012/0014553 titled "Gaming Headset with Programmable Audio" is hereby incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

TECHNICAL FIELD

Aspects of the present application relate to electronic gaming. More specifically, to methods and systems for a headset with integrated environment sensors.

BACKGROUND

Limitations and disadvantages of conventional approaches to audio processing for gaming will become apparent to one of skill in the art, through comparison of such approaches with some aspects of the present method and system set forth in the remainder of this disclosure with reference to the drawings.

BRIEF SUMMARY

Methods and systems are provided for a headset with integrated environment sensors, substantially as illustrated by and/or described in connection with at least one of the figures, as set forth more completely in the claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1A is a diagram that depicts an example gaming console, which may be utilized to provide headset with integrated environment sensor, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

FIG. 1B is a diagram that depicts an example gaming audio subsystem comprising a headset and an audio base-station, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

FIG. 1C is a diagram of an exemplary gaming console and an associated network of peripheral devices, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

FIGS. 2A and 2B are diagrams that depict two views of an example embodiment of a gaming headset, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

FIG. 2C is a diagram that depicts a block diagram of the example headset of FIGS. 2A and 2B, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

FIG. 3A is a diagram that depicts two views of an example embodiment of an audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

FIG. 3B is a diagram that depicts a block diagram of the audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

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FIG. 4 is a block diagram of an exemplary multi-purpose device, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

FIG. 5 is a block diagram illustrating an exemplary subsystem that may be utilized for adjusting the operation of a headset based on the sensed environment of the headset, in accordance with an embodiment of the disclosure.

FIG. 6 is a flow diagram illustrating exemplary steps for providing headset with integrated environment sensor, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Certain embodiments of the disclosure may be found in a method and system for a headset with integrated environment sensors. An electronic device may receive audio from an audio source and output the audio via speakers of the game headset. While outputting the audio via the speakers, the device may sense its surrounding environment, and adjust its operation, based on the sensed environment, to alert a listener wearing the game headset. The adjustment may comprise generation of one or more audio, visual, and/or vibration notifications to the listener using the device. The device may output a visual alert for presentation on a display that presents video corresponding to the receive audio and/or on a second screen communication device. A volume of the audio output via the speakers may be adjusted based on the sensed surrounding environment. The device may detect whether a first condition is present in the surrounding environment, decreasing the volume when the first condition is detected in the surrounding environment, and increasing the volume when the first condition is not detected in the surrounding environment. The device may detect whether a first condition is present in the surrounding environment, mute the volume when a first condition is detected in the surrounding environment, and unmute the volume when the first condition is not detected in the surrounding environment. The device may comprise one or more integrated sensors that are operable to perform the sensing of the surrounding environment. The device may receive external sensed information for the surrounding environment from one or more sensors that are external to the device. The device may generate one or more notifications to the listener using the device based on the external sensed information.

FIG. 1A depicts an example gaming console, which may be utilized to provide headset with integrated environment sensor, in accordance with various exemplary embodiment of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 1, there is shown a console 176, user interface devices 102, 104, a monitor 108, an audio subsystem 110, and a network 106.

The game console 176 may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to present a game to, and also enable game play interaction between, one or more local players and/or one or more remote players. The game console 176 which may be, for example, a Windows computing device, a Unix computing device, a Linux computing device, an Apple OSX computing device, an Apple iOS computing device, an Android computing device, a Microsoft Xbox, a Sony Playstation, a Nintendo Wii, or the like. The example game console 176 comprises a radio 126, network interface 130, video interface 132, audio interface 134, controller hub 150, main system on chip (SoC) 148, memory 162, optical drive 172, and storage device 174. The SoC 148 comprises central processing unit (CPU) 154, graphics processing unit (GPU)

156, audio processing unit (APU) **158**, cache memory **164**, and memory management unit (MMU) **166**. The various components of the game console **176** are communicatively coupled through various buses/links **136**, **138**, **142**, **144**, **146**, **152**, **160**, **168**, and **170**.

The controller hub **150** comprises circuitry that supports one or more data bus protocols such as High-Definition Multimedia Interface (HDMI), Universal Serial Bus (USB), Serial Advanced Technology Attachment II, III or variants thereof (SATA II, SATA III), embedded multimedia card interface (eMMC), Peripheral Component Interconnect Express (PCIe), or the like. The controller hub **150** may also be referred to as an input/output (I/O) controller hub. Exemplary controller hubs may comprise Southbridge, Haswell, Fusion and Sandybridge. The controller hub **150** may be operable to receive audio and/or video from an external source via link **112** (e.g., HDMI), from the optical drive (e.g., Blu-Ray) **172** via link **168** (e.g., SATA II, SATA III), and/or from storage **174** (e.g., hard drive, FLASH memory, or the like) via link **170** (e.g., SATA II, III and/or eMMC). Digital audio and/or video is output to the SoC **148** via link **136** (e.g., CEA-861-E compliant video and IEC 61937 compliant audio). The controller hub **150** exchanges data with the radio **126** via link **138** (e.g., USB), with external devices via link **140** (e.g., USB), with the storage **174** via the link **170**, and with the SoC **148** via the link **152** (e.g., PCIe).

The radio **126** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more wireless standards such as the IEEE 802.11 family of standards, the Bluetooth family of standards, near field communication (NFC), and/or the like.

The network interface **130** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more wired standards and to convert between wired standards. For example, the network interface **130** may communicate with the SoC **148** via link **142** using a first standard (e.g., PCIe) and may communicate with the network **106** using a second standard (e.g., gigabit Ethernet).

The video interface **132** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate video in accordance with one or more wired or wireless video transmission standards. For example, the video interface **132** may receive CEA-861-E compliant video data via link **144** and encapsulate/format, etc., the video data in accordance with an HDMI standard for output to the monitor **108** via an HDMI link **120**.

The audio interface **134** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate audio in accordance with one or more wired or wireless audio transmission standards. For example, the audio interface **134** may receive CEA-861-E compliant audio data via the link **146** and encapsulate/format, etc. the video data in accordance with an HDMI standard for output to the audio subsystem **110** via an HDMI link **122**.

The central processing unit (CPU) **154** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling/coordinating the overall operation of the game console **176**. Such instructions may be part of an operating system of the console and/or part of one or more software applications running on the console.

The graphics processing unit (GPU) **156** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be

operable to perform graphics processing functions such as compression, decompression, encoding, decoding, 3D rendering, and/or the like.

The audio processing unit (APU) **158** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform audio processing functions such as volume/gain control, compression, decompression, encoding, decoding, surround-sound processing, and/or the like to output single channel or multi-channel (e.g., 2 channels for stereo or 5, 7, or more channels for surround sound) audio signals. The APU **158** comprises memory (e.g., volatile and/or non-volatile memory) **159** which stores parameter settings to affect processing of audio by the APU **158**. For example, the parameter settings may include a first audio gain/volume setting that determines, at least in part, a volume of game audio output by the console **176** and a second audio gain/volume setting that determines, at least in part, a volume of chat audio output by the console **176**. The parameter settings may be modified via a graphical user interface (GUI) of the console and/or via an application programming interface (API) provided by the console **176**.

The cache memory **164** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may provide high-speed memory functions for use by the CPU **154**, GPU **156**, and/or APU **158**. The cache memory **164** may typically comprise DRAM or variants thereof. The memory **162** may comprise additional memory for use by the CPU **154**, GPU **156**, and/or APU **158**. The memory **162**, typically DRAM, may operate at a slower speed than the cache memory **164** but may also be less expensive than cache memory as well as operate at a higher speed than the memory of the storage device **174**. The MMU **166** controls accesses by the CPU **154**, GPU **156**, and/or APU **158** to the memory **162**, the cache **164**, and/or the storage device **174**.

In FIG. 1A, the example game console **176** is communicatively coupled to the user interface device **102**, the user interface device **104**, the network **106**, the monitor **108**, and the audio subsystem **110**.

Each of the user interface devices **102** and **104** may comprise, for example, a game controller, a keyboard, a motion sensor/position tracker, or the like. The user interface device **102** communicates with the game console **176** wirelessly via link **114** (e.g., Wi-Fi Direct, Bluetooth, NFC and/or the like). The user interface device **102** may be operable to communicate with the game console **176** via the wired link **140** (e.g., USB or the like).

The network **106** comprises a local area network and/or a wide area network. The game console **176** communicates with the network **106** via wired link **118** (e.g., Gigabit Ethernet).

The monitor **108** may be, for example, a LCD, OLED, or PLASMA screen. The game console **176** sends video to the monitor **108** via link **120** (e.g., HDMI).

The audio subsystem **110** may be, for example, a headset, a combination of headset and audio basestation, or a set of speakers and accompanying audio processing circuitry. The game console **176** sends audio to the audio subsystem **110** via link(s) **122** (e.g., S/PDIF for digital audio or "line out" for analog audio). Additional details of an example audio subsystem **110** are described below.

FIG. 1B is a diagram that depicts an example gaming audio subsystem comprising a headset and an audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 1B, there is shown a console **176**, a headset **200** and an audio basestation **301**. The headset **200** communicates with the basestation **301** via a link **180** and the basestation **301** communicates with the

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console **176** via a link **122**. The link **122** may be as described above. In an example implementation, the link **180** may be a proprietary wireless link operating in an unlicensed frequency band. The headset **200** may be as described below with reference to FIGS. **2A-2C**. The basestation **301** may be as described below with reference to FIGS. **3A-3B**.

FIG. **1C** is a diagram of an exemplary gaming console and an associated network of peripheral devices, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. **1C**, there is shown is the console **176**, which is communicatively coupled to a plurality of peripheral devices and a network **106**. The example peripheral devices shown include a monitor **108**, a user interface device **102**, a headset **200**, an audio basestation **301**, and a multi-purpose device **192**.

The monitor **108** and the user interface device **102** are as described above. The headset **200** is as described below with reference to FIGS. **2A-2C**. The audio basestation is as described below with reference to, for example, FIGS. **3A-3B**.

The multi-purpose device **192** may comprise, for example, a tablet computer, a smartphone, a laptop computer, or the like and that runs an operating system such as Android, Linux, Windows, iOS, OSX, or the like. An example multi-purpose device is described below with reference to FIG. **4**. Hardware (e.g., a network adaptor) and software (i.e., the operating system and one or more applications loaded onto the device **192**) may configure the device **192** for operating as part of the GPN **190**. For example, an application running on the device **192** may cause display of a graphical user interface (GUI), which may enable a user to access gaming-related data, commands, functions, parameter settings, and so on. The graphical user interface may enable a user to interact with the console **176** and the other devices of the GPN **190** to enhance the user's gaming experience.

The peripheral devices **102**, **108**, **192**, **200**, **300** are in communication with one another via a plurality of wired and/or wireless links (represented visually by the placement of the devices in the cloud of GPN **190**). Each of the peripheral devices in the gaming peripheral network (GPN) **190** may communicate with one or more others of the peripheral devices in the GPN **190** in a single-hop or multi-hop fashion. For example, the headset **200** may communicate with the basestation **301** in a single hop (e.g., over a proprietary RF link) and with the device **192** in a single hop (e.g., over a Bluetooth or Wi-Fi direct link), while the tablet may communicate with the basestation **301** in two hops via the headset **200**. As another example, the user interface device **102** may communicate with the headset **200** in a single hop (e.g., over a Bluetooth or Wi-Fi direct link) and with the device **192** in a single hop (e.g., over a Bluetooth or Wi-Fi direct link), while the device **192** may communicate with the headset **200** in two hops via the user interface device **102**. These example interconnections among the peripheral devices of the GPN **190** are merely examples, any number and/or types of links and/or hops among the devices of the GPN **190** is possible.

The GPN **190** may communicate with the console **176** via any one or more of the connections **114**, **140**, **122**, and **120** described above. The GPN **190** may communicate with a network **106** via one or more links **194** each of which may be, for example, Wi-Fi, wired Ethernet, and/or the like.

A database **182** which stores gaming audio data is accessible via the network **106**. The gaming audio data may comprise, for example, signatures of particular audio clips (e.g., individual sounds or collections or sequences of

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sounds) that are part of the game audio of particular games, of particular levels/scenarios of particular games, particular characters of particular games, etc. In an example implementation, the database **182** may comprise a plurality of records **183**, where each record **183** comprises an audio clip (or signature of the clip) **184**, a description of the clip **185** (e.g., the game it is from, when it occurs in the game, etc.), one or more gaming commands **186** associated with the clip, one or more parameter settings **187** associated with the clip, and/or other data associated with the audio clip. Records **183** of the database **182** may be downloadable to, or accessed in real-time by, one of more devices of the GPN **190**.

FIGS. **2A** and **2B** are diagrams that depict two views of an example embodiment of a gaming headset, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIGS. **2A** and **2B**, there are shown two views of an example headset **200** that may present audio output by a gaming console such as the console **176**. The headset **200** comprises a headband **202**, a microphone boom **206** with microphone **204**, ear cups **208a** and **208b** which surround speakers **216a** and **216b**, connector **210**, connector **214**, and user controls **212**. The headset **200** may also comprise a plurality of environment sensors, namely, **203a**, **203b**, **203c**, **203d**, **203e**, **203f**, **203g**, **203h**, **203i**, **203j**. The plurality of environment sensors **203a**, **203b**, **203c**, **203d**, **203e**, **203f**, **203g**, **203h**, **203i**, **203j** are collectively and individually referenced as sensor(s) **203**. The environment sensors **203a**, **203b**, **203c**, **203d**, **203e** are illustrated in FIG. **2A** and the environment sensors **203f**, **203g**, **203h**, **203i**, **203j** are illustrated in FIG. **2B**.

The connector **210** may be, for example, a 3.5 mm headphone socket for receiving analog audio signals (e.g., receiving chat audio via an Xbox "talkback" cable).

The microphone **204** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to convert acoustic waves (e.g., the voice of the person wearing the headset) to electric signals for processing by circuitry of the headset and/or for output to a device (e.g., console **176**, basestation **301**, a smartphone, and/or the like) that is in communication with the headset.

The speakers **216a** and **216b** may comprise circuitry that may be operable to convert electrical signals to sound waves. In accordance with various embodiments of the disclosure, the audio processing circuitry **230** may be operable to generate an alert signal that is converted to converted an audio alert by speakers **216a** and **216b**. Such an alert signal may be generated whenever a particular condition is detected by one or more of the sensors **203**. In some embodiments of the disclosure, game play audio may be muted in one or both of the speakers **216a** and **216b** when certain conditions are detected by the environment sensors **203**.

The user controls **212** may comprise dedicated and/or programmable buttons, switches, sliders, wheels, etc. for performing various functions. Example functions which the controls **212** may be configured to perform include: power the headset **200** on/off, mute/unmute the microphone **204**, control gain/volume of, and/or effects applied to, chat audio by the audio processing circuitry of the headset **200**, control gain/volume of, and/or effects applied to, game audio by the audio processing circuitry of the headset **200**, enable/disable/initiate pairing (e.g., via Bluetooth, Wi-Fi direct, NFC, or the like) with another computing device, and/or the like. Some of the user controls **212** may adaptively and/or dynamically change during gameplay based on a particular game that is being played. Some of the user controls **212** may also adaptively and/or dynamically change during

gameplay based on a particular player that is engage in the game play. The connector **214** may be, for example, a USB, thunderbolt, Firewire or other type of port or interface. The connector **214** may be used for downloading data to the headset **200** from another computing device and/or uploading data from the headset **200** to another computing device. Such data may include, for example, parameter settings (described below). Additionally, or alternatively, the connector **214** may be used for communicating with another computing device such as a smartphone, tablet compute, laptop computer, or the like.

The environment sensors **203** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to sense the surrounding environment of the headset **200**. Exemplary environment sensors may comprise, for example, a camera, a gyroscope, an accelerometer, a motion sensor, a biometric sensor, a microphone, a heat sensor, an infrared sensor, and so on. One or more of the microphones (e.g., microphone **204** and/or one or more other microphones represented as a sensor **203**) may be directional so that the direction of a detected sound may be determined. The sensed information from the environment sensors **203** may be analyzed or assessed in order to determine the conditions of the surrounding environment of the headset **200**. The information from the sensors **203** may be combined in order to get a more accurate sense of the conditions of the surrounding environment of the headset **200**. For example, a camera **203** may be operable to utilize face detection to determine the number of people that are in the surrounding environment. This information may be combined with audio from the microphone **204** (or **203**) and/or a heat signature from an infrared sensor **203** to determine how close the people are to the listener/wearer of the headset. Information stored in the headset **200** may also be utilized to determine the identity of the persons or pets that may have entered the room without the listener of the headset **200** being aware (e.g., because the listener is immersed in game play with corresponding game and chat audio coming through the speakers of the headset). The environment sensors **203** may be positioned at different locations of the headset **200** in order to determine the surrounding environment in front of, to the rear of, and/or to the sides of the listener of the headset.

The operation of the headset **200** may be adjusted based on the detected or determined conditions of the surroundings. For example, if the assessments determine that a person may be standing behind the listener of the headset **200**, then the headset **200** may play an audio notification to indicate that the person is standing behind the listener. The headset **200** may also generate a visible alert that may be overlaid on the game display and/or on the display of device **192** during game play. In another example, if the assessment determines that the footsteps of several persons were detected behind the listener of the headset **200**, then the headset **200** may play an audio notification to indicate that the footsteps of several persons were detected behind the listener. The headset **200** may also generate a visible alert, audible alert and/or a vibration alert to notify the listener of the detected footsteps. If sound is detected coming from a particular direction, the headset **200** may decrease the volume (possibly completely muting) the speaker facing the direction of the sound so that the listener of the headset **200** may hear the detected sounds.

FIG. 2C is a diagram that depicts a block diagram of the exemplary headset of FIGS. 2A and 2B, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 2C, there is shown a headset **200**. In addition to the

connector **210**, user controls **212**, connector **214**, microphone **204**, and speakers **216a** and **216b** already discussed, there are shown a radio **220**, a CPU **222**, a storage device **224**, a memory **226**, and an audio processing circuit **230**.

FIG. 2C also shows integrated environment sensors **225**, and sensor processing module **227**, and vibration module **229**.

The radio **220** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more standardized (such as, for example, the IEEE 802.11 family of standards, NFC, the Bluetooth family of standards, and/or the like) and/or proprietary wireless protocol(s) (e.g., a proprietary protocol for receiving audio from an audio basestation such as the basestation **301**).

The CPU **222** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling/coordinating the overall operation of the headset **200**. Such instructions may be part of an operating system or state machine of the headset **200** and/or part of one or more software applications running on the headset **200**. In some implementations, the CPU **222** may be, for example, a programmable interrupt controller, a state machine, or the like.

The CPU **222** may also be operable to handle operation of the headset **200**, which may comprise a plurality of integrated environment sensors **225**. The integrated environment sensors **225** may be integrated within the headset **200**. The CPU **222** may be operable to dynamically and/or adaptively configure and manage operation of the integrated environment sensors **225** which may acquire information about the surrounding environment of the headset **200**. The CPU **222** may also be operable to dynamically and/or adaptively configure and manage operation of one or more the environment sensors, which are located external to the headset **200**, and may acquire information about the surrounding environment of the headset **200**. The CPU **222** may be operable to utilize data stored in the storage device **224** and/or the memory **226** to configure and/or manage operation of the integrated environment sensors **225** and also the external environment sensors. The CPU **222** may be operable to combine information from a plurality of the sensors in order to get a more accurate sense of the conditions of the surrounding environment of the headset **200**.

The storage device **224** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may comprise, for example, FLASH or other nonvolatile memory, which may be operable to store data comprising operating data, configuration data, settings, and so on, which may be used by the CPU **222** and/or the audio processing circuit **230**. Such data may include, for example, parameter settings that affect processing of audio signals in the headset **200** and parameter settings that affect functions performed by the user controls **212**. For example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, a gain of one or more gain elements of the audio processing circuit **230**. As another example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, a frequency response of one or more filters that operate on audio signals in the audio processing circuit **230**. As another example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, whether and which sound effects are added to audio signals in the audio processing circuit **230** (e.g., which effects to add to microphone audio to morph the user's voice). Example parameter settings which affect audio processing are described in the co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/040,144 titled "Gaming Headset with Programmable Audio" and published as US2012/0014553, the entirety of which is hereby incorporated herein

by reference. Particular parameter settings may be selected autonomously by the headset **200** in accordance with one or more algorithms, based on user input (e.g., via controls **212**), and/or based on input received via one or more of the connectors **210** and **214**.

The memory **226** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may comprise volatile memory used by the CPU **222** and/or audio processing circuit **230** as program memory, for storing runtime data, etc. In this regard, the memory **226** may comprise information and/or data that may be utilized to control operation of the integrated environment sensors **225** and/or the external environment sensors, which are utilized to sense the surrounding environment of the headset **200**.

The audio processing circuit **230** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform audio processing functions such as volume/gain control, compression, decompression, encoding, decoding, introduction of audio effects (e.g., echo, phasing, virtual surround effect, etc.), and/or the like. As described above, the processing performed by the audio processing circuit **230** may be determined, at least in part, by which parameter settings have been selected. The processing performed by the audio processing circuit **230** may also be determined based on default settings, player preference, and/or by adaptive and/or dynamic changes to the game play environment. The processing may be performed on game, chat, and/or microphone audio that is subsequently output to speaker **216a** and **216b**. Additionally, or alternatively, the processing may be performed on chat audio that is subsequently output to the connector **210** and/or radio **220**.

The integrated environment sensors **225** may be substantially similar to the **203a**, **203b**, **203c**, **203d**, **203e**, **203f**, **203g**, **203h**, **203i**, **203j**, which are shown and described with respect to, for example, FIGS. **2A** and **2C**. The external environment sensors may be substantially similar to the integrated environment sensors **225**. The integrated environment sensors **225** may comprise one or more environment sensors, which may comprise suitable logic, circuit, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to sense the surrounding environment of the headset **200**. Exemplary integrated environment sensors **225** may comprise, for example, a camera, a gyroscope, an accelerometer, a motion sensor, a biometric sensor, a microphone, a heat sensor, an infrared sensor, and so on. One or more of the microphones **204** may comprise directional microphones. The directional microphones may be operable to sense sounds in particular directions in order to more accurately determine a direction of a sound source within the surrounding environment of the headset **200**.

In an example implementation, the headset **200** may be connected to a device (e.g., **192**) with voice telephony and music capabilities. During a voice call, the headset **200**, the device, or combination of the two may automatically detect that a call is in progress (e.g., in response to the user pressing an off-hook button on the headset or on the device itself) and/or that the wearer of the headset is talking (e.g., when level of captured vocal band audio in the direction of the user's mouth is above a threshold). In response to detecting that a call is in progress and/or that the wearer of the headset **200** is talking, the directionality of the microphone **204** may be controlled (e.g., mechanically through motors, servos, or the like and/or electrically through controlling gain and phase of multiple elements of a microphone array) for optimal capture of the wearer's voice. On the other hand, when the headset **200**, device, or combination of the two detects that a call is not in progress (e.g., based on the user

pressing an on-hook button on the device or on the headset **200**, and/or based on the fact that audio having characteristics indicating that the headset is currently outputting music or some other content other than a voice call) the directionality of the microphone **204** may be controlled to point in a different direction. For example, when the wearer is listening to music the directionality of the microphone may be controlled to point behind the wearer of the headset **200**. This may be useful, for example, so that the wearer can hear someone approaching from behind them (e.g., to hear bikes or cars or other persons approaching while jogging and listening to music).

In accordance with various embodiments of the disclosure, the integrated environment sensors **225** and/or the external environment sensors may be operable to sense and capture information that is related to the surrounding environment of the headset **200**. The headset **200** may be operable to assess the information and may adjust operation of the headset **200** based on the assessment. For example, the headset **200** may be operable to alert or warn a listener of the headset **200** that there may be a particular level of threat, that another person may be shadowing the listener, and/or that there may be some movement activity in the background based on the assessment. The warning may indicate the level of the threat (e.g., whether or not the wearer of the headset is in imminent danger). The headset **200** may be operable to generate different types of notifications to alert the listener of the headset **200**. For example, an audio alert, a visual alert and/or a vibration alert may be generated by the headset **200** in order to get the attention of the listener and warn the listener of the existing condition of the sensed surrounding environment. The audio alert may comprise a tone, multiple tones, and any audible signal, which may be generated by the audio processing circuit **230** and output by the speakers **216a**, **216b**. In some embodiments of the disclosure, the volume of the game play audio may be decreased by the headset **200** when the integrated environment sensors **225** and/or the external environment sensors detect a particular condition. The lowering of the game play audio may enable the listener of the headset **200** to more readily hear sounds in the environment. For example, approaching footsteps or vehicles may be more readily heard when the volume of the game play audio is lowered. In some embodiments of the disclosure, the volume of the game play audio may be muted to more clearly hear sounds that may be detected by the microphone **204**. The visual alert may be presented on a display that is being utilized to present the game play and/or on a second screen communication device (e.g., device **192**).

The vibration module **229** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to generate a vibration signal in response to a condition that is detected by the integrated environment sensors **225** and/or the external environment sensors.

The sensor processing module **227** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to process signals that are received from the integrated environment sensors **225** and/or the external environment sensors. The sensor processing module **227** may control or adjust operation of the headset **200** to alert or notify a listener of the headset of a condition based on results generated from the processing of the signals from the integrated environment sensors **225** and/or the external environment sensors.

FIG. **3A** is a diagram that depicts two views of an example embodiment of an audio basestation, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. **3A**, there is shown an exemplary embodiment of an

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audio basestation **301**. The basestation **301** comprises status indicators **302**, user controls **310**, power port **324**, and audio connectors **314**, **316**, **318**, and **320**.

The audio connectors **314** and **316** may comprise digital audio in and digital audio out (e.g., S/PDIF) connectors, respectively. The audio connectors **318** and **320** may comprise a left “line in” and a right “line in” connector, respectively. The controls **310** may comprise, for example, a power button, a button for enabling/disabling virtual surround sound, a button for adjusting the perceived angles of the speakers when the virtual surround sound is enabled, and a dial for controlling a volume/gain of the audio received via the “line in” connectors **318** and **320**. The status indicators **302** may indicate, for example, whether the audio basestation **301** is powered on, whether audio data is being received by the basestation **301** via connectors **314**, and/or what type of audio data (e.g., Dolby Digital) is being received by the basestation **301**.

FIG. 3B is a diagram that depicts a block diagram of the audio basestation **301**, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 3B, there is shown an exemplary embodiment of an audio basestation **301**. In addition to the user controls **310**, indicators **302**, and connectors **314**, **316**, **318**, and **320** described above, the block diagram additionally shows a CPU **322**, a storage device **323**, a memory **326**, a radio **320**, an audio processing circuit **330**, and a radio **332**.

The radio **320** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more standardized (such as the IEEE 802.11 family of standards, the Bluetooth family of standards, NFC, and/or the like) and/or proprietary (e.g., proprietary protocol for receiving audio protocols for receiving audio from a console such as the console **176**) wireless protocols.

The radio **332** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate in accordance with one or more standardized (such as, for example, the IEEE 802.11 family of standards, the Bluetooth family of standards, and/or the like) and/or proprietary wireless protocol(s) (e.g., a proprietary protocol for transmitting audio to the headphones **200**).

The CPU **322** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling/coordinating the overall operation of the audio basestation **301**. Such instructions may be part of an operating system or state machine of the audio basestation **301** and/or part of one or more software applications running on the audio basestation **301**. In some implementations, the CPU **322** may be, for example, a programmable interrupt controller, a state machine, or the like.

The storage **323** may comprise, for example, FLASH or other nonvolatile memory for storing data which may be used by the CPU **322** and/or the audio processing circuitry **330**. Such data may include, for example, parameter settings that affect processing of audio signals in the basestation **301**. For example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, a gain of one or more gain elements of the audio processing circuitry **330**. As another example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, a frequency response of one or more filters that operate on audio signals in the audio processing circuitry **330**. As another example, one or more parameter settings may determine, at least in part, whether and which sound effects are added to audio signals in the audio processing circuitry **330** (e.g., which effects to add to microphone audio to morph the user’s voice). Example parameter settings which affect

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audio processing are described in the co-pending U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/040,144 titled “Gaming Headset with Programmable Audio” and published as US2012/0014553, the entirety of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. Particular parameter settings may be selected autonomously by the basestation **301** in accordance with one or more algorithms, based on user input (e.g., via controls **310**), and/or based on input received via one or more of the connectors **314**, **316**, **318**, and **320**.

The memory **326** may comprise volatile memory used by the CPU **322** and/or audio processing circuit **330** as program memory, for storing runtime data, etc.

The audio processing circuit **330** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform audio processing functions such as volume/gain control, compression, decompression, encoding, decoding, introduction of audio effects (e.g., echo, phasing, virtual surround effect, etc.), and/or the like. As described above, the processing performed by the audio processing circuit **330** may be determined, at least in part, by which parameter settings have been selected. The processing may be performed on game and/or chat audio signals that are subsequently output to a device (e.g., headset **200**) in communication with the basestation **301**. Additionally, or alternatively, the processing may be performed on a microphone audio signal that is subsequently output to a device (e.g., console **176**) in communication with the basestation **301**.

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of an exemplary multi-purpose device **192**, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. The example multi-purpose device **192** comprises an application processor **402**, memory subsystem **404**, a cellular/GPS networking subsystem **406**, sensors **408**, power management subsystem **410**, LAN subsystem **412**, bus adaptor **414**, user interface subsystem **416**, and audio processor **418**.

The application processor **402** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling/coordinating the overall operation of the multi-purpose device **192** as well as graphics processing functions of the multi-purpose device **192**. Such instructions may be part of an operating system of the console and/or part of one or more software applications running on the console.

The memory subsystem **404** comprises volatile memory for storing runtime data, nonvolatile memory for mass storage and long-term storage, and/or a memory controller which controls reads/writes to memory.

The cellular/GPS networking subsystem **406** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform baseband processing and analog/RF processing for transmission and reception of cellular and GPS signals.

The sensors **408** comprise, for example, a camera, a gyroscope, an accelerometer, a biometric sensor, environment sensors and/or the like.

The power management subsystem **410** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to manage distribution of power among the various components of the multi-purpose device **192**.

The LAN subsystem **412** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to perform baseband processing and analog/RF processing for transmission and reception of cellular and GPS signals.

The bus adaptor **414** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable for interfacing one or more internal data busses of the multi-purpose device

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with an external bus (e.g., a Universal Serial Bus) for transferring data to/from the multi-purpose device via a wired connection.

The user interface subsystem **416** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to control and relay signals to/from a touchscreen, hard buttons, and/or other input devices of the multi-purpose device **192**.

The audio processor **418** comprises suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to process (e.g., digital-to-analog conversion, analog-to-digital conversion, compression, decompression, encryption, decryption, resampling, etc.) audio signals. The audio processor **418** may be operable to receive and/or output signals via a connector such as a 3.5 mm stereo and microphone connector.

FIG. **5** is a block diagram illustrating an exemplary subsystem that may be utilized for adjusting the operation of a headset based on the sensed environment of the headset, in accordance with an embodiment of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. **5**, there is shown a game console **502**, a monitor **503**, a headset **504**, a base station **508**, a game controller **530**, external environment sensors **532**, and a second screen communication device **534**. The headset **504** may comprise an audio processor **504a**, an internal storage device **504b**, a sensor processing module **504d**, a radio **504e**, integrated environment sensors **504f**, vibration module **504g**, and a CPU **522**.

The game console **502** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to present a game to, and also enable game play interaction between, one or more local players and/or one or more remote players. The game console **502** may be substantially similar to the game console **176**, which is shown and described with respect to, for example, FIG. **1A**. The game console **502** may be operable to generate output video signals for a game over a video channel and output corresponding audio signals for the game over one or more of a plurality of audio channels. Exemplary audio channels may comprise a center (CTR) channel, a front right (FR) channel, a front left (FL) channel, a rear right (RR) channel, a rear left (RL) channel, a side right (SR) channel, and a side left (SL) channel. The audio and video generated from the game console **502** during game play may be communicated to the monitor **503** to be displayed by the monitor **503**.

The monitor **503** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to display corresponding audio and video that may be received from the game console **502** for the game during game play. The monitor **503** may comprise a television (TV), computer monitor, laptop display, and so on.

The headset **504** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to receive the corresponding audio signals for the game. The headset **504** may be substantially similar to the headset **200**, which is shown and described with respect to, for example, FIGS. **2A**, **2B** and **2C**. The headset **504** may be operable to monitor and analyze the audio signals detected within the surrounding environment of the headset **504** and may adjust one or more functions of the headset **504** in order to alert the listener of the headset **504** of the conditions of surrounding environment. The headset **504** may be controlled so that it generates a notification that alerts the listener about the condition of the surrounding environment of the headset **504**. The headset **504** may determine directionality, frequency or pitch, frequency of occurrence and/or gain of the detected sounds and may, for example, adjust the headset

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volume and/or generate an alert to notify the listener that a person or vehicle may be approaching from the determined direction. The headset **504** may also be operable to combine information from a plurality of different sensors to more accurately determine the surrounding environment of the headset **504**.

The audio processor **504a** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to monitor the audio signals within the surrounding environment of the headset. The audio processor **504a** may be substantially similar to the audio processing circuit **230**, which is shown and described with respect to FIG. **2C**. The audio processor **504a** may be operable to utilize signal analysis to determine the characteristics of sounds in the monitored plurality of audio channels. The audio processor **504a** may detect certain sounds and characteristics such as directionality, frequency or pitch, frequency of occurrence and/or intensity. The results of the analysis by the audio processor **504a** may be utilized to control operation or functions of the headset **504** and/or to generate an alert to gain the attention of the listener of the headset **504**. For example, the volume of the headset **504** may be decreased or muted in instances where the audio processor **504a** may detect the footsteps of a person or animal such as the listener's pet.

The internal storage device **504b** may comprise one or more suitable devices that may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to store information for a game and also store configuration information for the integrated environment sensors **504f** and/or the external environment sensors **532**. The headset **504** may utilize stored information and/or configuration information to configure and/or communicate with the integrated environment sensors **504f** and/or the external environment sensors **532**. The internal storage device **504b** may be substantially similar to the storage device **224**, which is shown and described with respect to FIG. **2C**.

The CPU **522** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to execute instructions for controlling, managing and/or coordinating the overall operation of the headset **504**. In this regard, the CPU **522** may be operable to control, manage and coordinate operation of the components in the headset **504**, which comprises the audio processor **504a**, the internal storage device **504b**, the sensor processing module **504d**, the radio **504e**, the integrated environment sensors **504f**, and the vibration module **504g**. The CPU **522** may also be operable to coordinate and manage operations between the headset **504**, the game console **502**, the game controller **530**, the external environment sensors **532** and the second screen communication device **534**. The CPU **522** may be substantially similar to the CPU **222**, which is shown and described with respect to, for example, FIG. **2C**. In an exemplary embodiment of the disclosure, the CPU **522** may be operable to control or adjust operation of the headset **504** and/or cause an alert to be generated based on surrounding environment information that may be received from the integrated environment sensors **504f** and/or the external environment sensors **532**.

The sensor processing module **504d** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to process surrounding environment information that may be received from the integrated environment sensors **504f** and/or the external environment sensors **532**. The sensor processing module **504d** may also be operable to process audio information received from the audio processor **504a**, which corresponds to sounds that may be detected

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within the surrounding environment of the headset **504**. The sensor processing module **504d** may be operable to combine surrounding environment information that may be received from the integrated environment sensors **504f**, the audio processor **504a**, and/or the external environment sensors **532** in order to more accurately determine the conditions of the surrounding environment of the headset **504**.

The radio **504e** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry interfaces and/or code that may be operable to communicate surrounding environment information between the headset **504**, the external environment sensors **532** and second screen communication device **534**. The radio **504e** may be substantially similar to the radio **220**, which is shown and described with respect to, for example, FIG. 2C. In accordance with an embodiment of the disclosure, the radio **504e** may be utilized to communicate visual alerts from the headset **504** to the game console **502**. In accordance with another embodiment of the disclosure, the radio **504e** may be utilized to communicate visual alerts from the headset **504** to the second screen communication device **534**. The visual alerts may comprise information that may be utilized to notify the listener of the headset **504** about the surrounding environment of the headset **504**. The visual alerts that are communicated to the game console **502** may be overlaid on the game play that is presented on the monitor **503**.

The vibration module **504g** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry interfaces and/or code that may be operable to provide a vibration that may be utilized to alert the listener of the headset **504** of the conditions of the surrounding environment of the headset **504**. The CPU **522** may be operable to trigger the vibration module **504g** to vibrate in instances when the listener of the headset **504** has to be alerted of the conditions of the surrounding environment of the headset **504**.

The base station **508** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry interfaces and/or code that may be operable to provide wireless connectivity between the game console **502**, the headset **504**, the game controller **530**, the external environment sensors **532** and the second screen communication device **534**. The base station **508** may be substantially similar to the base station **301**, which is shown and described with respect to, for example, FIGS. 1B and 1C.

The game controller **530** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry interfaces and/or code that may enable a player to engage in game play and manipulate the in-game action (e.g., control the listener's on-screen character). In this regard, the game controller **530** may be operable to communicate with the headset **504** via, for example, the base station **508**.

The integrated environment sensors **504f** may comprise one or more environment sensors within the headset **504**, which may comprise suitable logic, circuit, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to sense the surrounding environment of the headset **504**. The sensed surrounding environment information from the sensors in the integrated environment sensors **504f** may be communicated to the processing module **504d** for processing. Exemplary integrated environment sensors **504f** may comprise, for example, cameras, gyroscopes, accelerometers, motion sensors, biometric sensors, microphones, heat sensors, infrared sensors, and so on. The integrated environment sensors **504f** may be substantially similar to the integrated environment sensors **225**, which is shown and described with respect to, for example, FIG. 2C.

The external environment sensors **532** may comprise one or more environment sensors, which are located external to the headset **504**, and which may comprise suitable logic,

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circuit, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to sense the surrounding environment of the headset **504**. The sensed surrounding environment information from the sensors in the external environment sensors **532** may be communicated to the sensor processing module **504d** for processing. Exemplary external environment sensors **532** may comprise, for example, cameras, gyroscopes, accelerometers, motion sensors, biometric sensors, microphones, heat sensors, infrared sensors, and so on. The integrated environment sensors **504f** may be substantially similar to the integrated environment sensors **225**, which is shown and described with respect to, for example, FIG. 2C. The external environment sensors **532** may be located at different positions in, for example, a game room. For example, the external environment sensors **532** may be located on walls, the ceiling, on desk, tables and so on in the game room. The external environment sensors **532** may be communicate wirelessly with the basestation **508** in order to communicate with the headset **504**.

The second screen communication device **534** may comprise suitable logic, circuitry, interfaces and/or code that may be operable to display a visual alert that may be generated by the headset **504**. The visual alert may comprise visual information that notifies the listener of the headset of the condition of the surrounding environment of the headset **504**. In this regard, the headset **504** may be operable to communicate information for the visual alert to the second screen communication device **534** via the base station **508**.

In operation, the headset **504** may be operable to configure the integrated environment sensors **504f** and/or the external environment sensors **532** to sense surrounding environment of the headset. The sensor processing module **504d** may be operable to process the information received from the integrated environment sensors **504f** and/or the external environment sensors **532**. Based on the processed information, the operation and/or a function of the headset **504** may be adjusted. For example, the headset **504** may be adjusted or configured to generate one or more notifications comprising an audio alert, a visual alert and/or a vibration alert in order to notify the listener of the headset **504** of the sensed surrounding environment of the headset **504**.

In accordance with an embodiment of the disclosure, the visual alert may be presented on the monitor **503**, which is being utilized to present the game play. In accordance with another embodiment of the disclosure, the visual alert may be presented on the second screen communication device **534** via the base station **508**. The CPU **522** may also be operable to adjust a volume of the headset based on the determined condition of the surrounding environment of the headset **504**. In this regard, the volume of the headset **504** may be increased, decreased, muted and un-muted based on the determined condition of the surrounding environment. For example, in instances when the sensor processing module **504d** in headset **504** determines that the listener of the headset **504** may be crossing a busy intersection based on the input from the sensors, the headset **504** may be muted when the listener crosses the intersection. In another example, in instances when the sensor processing module **504d** in headset **504** determines that someone or something is approaching the listener of the headset **504**, the headset **504** may present an audio alert such as a tone, and may decrease the volume of the headset so that the listener may hear the approaching person or thing.

FIG. 6 is a flow diagram illustrating exemplary steps for providing headset with integrated environment sensor, in accordance with various exemplary embodiments of the disclosure. Referring to FIG. 6, there is shown a flow chart **600** comprising a plurality of exemplary steps, namely, **602**

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through 608. In step 602, the headset configures the integrated environment sensors and/or the external environment sensors to sense the surrounding environment of the headset. In step 604, the headset receives corresponding sensed surrounding environment information from the integrated environment sensors and/or the external environment sensors. In step 606, the headset processes the received corresponding sensed surrounding environment information. In step 608, the headset adjusts operation and/or function of the headset such as decrease the volume of the headset, and/or generates an alert such as an audio alert, a visual alert, and/or vibration alert based on the processed corresponding sensed surrounding environment information.

In accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the disclosure, an electronic device (e.g., headset 200 and/or basestation 300) may receive audio from an audio source (e.g., console 176) and output the audio via speakers of the device. While outputting the audio via the speakers, the device may sense its surrounding environment, and adjust its operation, based on the sensed environment, to alert a listener using the device (e.g., a listener wearing headset 200 and listening to game and/or chat audio). The adjustment may comprise generation of one or more audio, visual, and/or vibration notifications to the listener using the device. The device may output a visual alert for presentation on a display (e.g., 503) that presents video corresponding to the receive audio and/or on a second screen communication device (e.g., 534). A volume of the audio output via the speakers may be adjusted based on the sensed surrounding environment. The device may detect whether a first condition is present in the surrounding environment, decrease the volume when the first condition is detected in the surrounding environment, and increase the volume when the first condition is not detected in the surrounding environment. The device may detect whether a first condition is present in the surrounding environment, mute the volume when a first condition is detected in the surrounding environment, and unmute the volume when the first condition is not detected in the surrounding environment. The device may comprise one or more integrated sensors (e.g., 203) that are operable to perform the sensing of the surrounding environment. The device may receive external sensed information for the surrounding environment from one or more sensors (e.g., 532) that are external to the device. The device may generate one or more notifications to the listener using the device based on the external sensed information.

As utilized herein the terms “circuits” and “circuitry” refer to physical electronic components (i.e. hardware) and any software and/or firmware (“code”) which may configure the hardware, be executed by the hardware, and or otherwise be associated with the hardware. As used herein, for example, a particular processor and memory may comprise a first “circuit” when executing a first one or more lines of code and may comprise a second “circuit” when executing a second one or more lines of code. As utilized herein, “and/or” means any one or more of the items in the list joined by “and/or”. As an example, “x and/or y” means any element of the three-element set {(x), (y), (x, y)}. As another example, “x, y, and/or z” means any element of the seven-element set {(x), (y), (z), (x, y), (x, z), (y, z), (x, y, z)}. As utilized herein, the terms “e.g.,” and “for example” set off lists of one or more non-limiting examples, instances, or illustrations. As utilized herein, circuitry is “operable” to perform a function whenever the circuitry comprises the necessary hardware and code (if any is necessary) to per-

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form the function, regardless of whether performance of the function is disabled, or not enabled, by some user-configurable setting.

Throughout this disclosure, the use of the terms dynamically and/or adaptively with respect to an operation means that, for example, parameters for, configurations for and/or execution of the operation may be configured or reconfigured during run-time (e.g., in, or near, real-time) based on newly received or updated information or data. For example, an operation within a transmitter and/or a receiver may be configured or reconfigured based on, for example, current, recently received and/or updated signals, information and/or data.

The present method and/or system may be realized in hardware, software, or a combination of hardware and software. The present methods and/or systems may be realized in a centralized fashion in at least one computing system, or in a distributed fashion where different elements are spread across several interconnected computing systems. Any kind of computing system or other apparatus adapted for carrying out the methods described herein is suited. A typical combination of hardware and software may be a general-purpose computing system with a program or other code that, when being loaded and executed, controls the computing system such that it carries out the methods described herein. Another typical implementation may comprise an application specific integrated circuit or chip. Some implementations may comprise a non-transitory machine-readable (e.g., computer readable) medium (e.g., FLASH drive, optical disk, magnetic storage disk, or the like) having stored thereon one or more lines of code executable by a machine, thereby causing the machine to perform processes as described herein.

While the present method and/or system has been described with reference to certain implementations, it will be understood by those skilled in the art that various changes may be made and equivalents may be substituted without departing from the scope of the present method and/or system. In addition, many modifications may be made to adapt a particular situation or material to the teachings of the present disclosure without departing from its scope. Therefore, it is intended that the present method and/or system not be limited to the particular implementations disclosed, but that the present method and/or system will include all implementations falling within the scope of the appended claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A method, comprising:

in a game headset operatively coupled to a gaming system:

receiving audio from an audio source and outputting said audio via speakers of said headset;

while outputting said audio via said speakers, sensing a surrounding environment of said headset using a plurality of sensors, a plurality of sensors in each ear cup of said headset and one or more sensors being in a front side of a headband coupling said ear cups and one or more sensors being in a back side of said headband coupling said ear cups, said headband extending over a top of a user's head;

reducing volume of said audio output via said speakers when said sensing of said surrounding environment includes sensing a proximity of a person using an infrared sensor and an identity of said person using a microphone in said headset, wherein information from audio from said microphone is combined with a heat

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signature from said one or more sensors to determine how close a person is to said headset;
sensing a direction to said person and reducing a volume of a speaker of said headset in said determined direction; and
communicating, based on said sensing said surrounding environment, a visual alert that is overlaid on game video shown on a visual display external to said game headset.

2. The method according to claim 1, comprising adjusting operation of said headset based on said sensed surrounding environment, wherein said adjusting said operation of said headset comprises generating one or more notifications to said listener wearing said headset.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein said generated one or more notifications comprises one or more of: an audio alert and a vibration alert.

4. The method according to claim 3, comprising outputting a visual alert for presentation on said visual display that presents said video corresponding to said audio.

5. The method according to claim 2, wherein said game headset receives sensor information from sensors external to aid headset.

6. The method according to claim 1, wherein at least one of said sensors comprises an infrared sensor in said headset.

7. The method according to claim 1, comprising:
detecting whether a first condition is present in said surrounding environment of said headset;
decreasing said volume when said first condition is detected in said surrounding environment of said headset; and
increasing said volume when said first condition is not detected in said surrounding environment of said headset.

8. The method according to claim 1, comprising:
detecting whether a first condition is present in said surrounding environment of said headset;
muting said volume when a first condition is detected in said surrounding environment of said headset; and
unmuting said volume when said first condition is not detected in said surrounding environment of said headset.

9. A system comprising:
a headset comprising speakers and operable to:
receive audio from an audio source and output said audio via said speakers;
during said output of said audio via said speakers, sense a surrounding environment of said game headset using a plurality of sensors, a plurality of sensors in each ear cup of said headset and one or more sensors being in a front side of a headband coupling said ear cups and one or more sensors being in a back side of said headband, said headband extending over a top of a user's head;

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reduce volume of said audio output via said speakers when said sensing of said surrounding environment includes sensing a proximity of a person using an infrared sensor and an identity of said person using a microphone in said headset, wherein information from audio from said microphone is combined with a heat signature from said infrared sensor to determine how close a person is to said headset;
sensing a direction to said person and reducing a volume of a speaker of said headset in said determined direction; and
communicate, based on said sensed environment, a visual alert that is overlaid on game video shown on a visual display external to said headset.

10. The system according to claim 9, wherein:
said headset is operable to adjust operation of said headset based on said sensed surrounding environment; and
said adjustment of said operation comprises generation of one or more notifications to said listener wearing said headset.

11. The system according to claim 10, wherein said generated one or more notifications comprises one or more of: an audio alert and a vibration alert.

12. The system according to claim 11, wherein said headset is operable to output a visual alert for presentation on said display that presents video corresponding to said audio.

13. The system according to claim 10, wherein said presence of said person is sensed using an infrared sensor in said headset.

14. The system according to claim 10, wherein said headset receives sensor information from sensors external to said game headset.

15. The system according to claim 9, wherein said headset is operable to:
detect whether a first condition is present in said surrounding environment of said headset;
decrease said volume when said first condition is detected in said surrounding environment of said headset; and
increase said volume when said first condition is not detected in said surrounding environment of said headset.

16. The system according to claim 9, wherein said headset is operable to:
detect whether a first condition is present in said surrounding environment of said headset;
mute said volume when a first condition is detected in said surrounding environment of said headset; and
unmute said volume when said first condition is not detected in said surrounding environment of said headset.

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